

THE JAINA NARRATIVE LITERATURE IN SOUTH INDIA AND ITS COUNTERPARTS

A great part of the Jaina literature written in Prakrit and Sanskrit is narrative. The same is true of the other literatures of India, including the Dravidian ones. The Tamil and Kannaḍa Jaina literatures are almost entirely narrative or gnomic, because the technical treatises on rituals are usually written in Sanskrit. The gnomic sentences are either collected in anthologies or included in stories, as is usual throughout India and in countries influenced by Indian culture. The most famous anthologies in Tamil have been translated many times; the narrative poems, on the other hand, are often little more than titles in manuals, and have rarely been investigated.

This difference in treatment is quite understandable. The gnomic sentences are clear, beautiful, and short; the pieces of high poetic merit are difficult to understand, hard to translate well, and very long. The sentences are popular, and even illiterate people know at least some of the most famous. The appreciation of the *kāvya*s, however, requires a full acquaintance not only with the grammar of the *centamiḷ*, « the beautiful Tamil », but also with the refined and erudite culture of the authors. The *aṇi* in Tamil are similar to the *alaṃkāras* of the Sanskrit *kāvya*s, but the shortness of many Tamil words, together with the full application of the numerous *sandhi* rules which are unavoidable in poetry, necessitate the use of commentaries. These are often highly elaborated by ancient learned scholars. We may sometimes hesitate to accept the interpretations they offer, but all this literature is a mine with a rich vein awaiting workers.

Jaina works are very numerous in Tamil literature, and some rank highly as poetry. They are famous not merely in Jaina circles, but throughout the country, irrespective of religious creed. As far as narra-

tive literature is concerned, the most important works are three *kāvya*s (*kāppiyaṅka*): *Civakacintāmaṇi*, *Nilakēci* and *Cūlāmaṇi*. A fourth, the only one which has been translated into English and French, is the *Cilappatikāram*, but its Jaina character is questionable.

The *Civakacintāmaṇi*, or simply *Cintāmaṇi*, is the work of Tiruttak-katēvar, who lived around 900 A.D. He was a Jaina. His poem consists of more than 3000 quatrains in various metres. It tells the story of one *Civakaṇ*, in 13 cantos called *ilampakam*, Sanskrit *lambaka*, like the chapters in the *Kathāsaritsāgara* and other collections of tales, but unlike those in the *Peruṅkatai*, a Tamil counterpart of the *Bṛhatkathā*, where each division is called *kāṇṭam*. There is a Sanskrit version of the same text, called *Jivakacintāmaṇi*. As far as I am aware, it has not become popular.

Civakaṇ, or *Jivaka*, is the son of a king called *Caccantaṇ*, of Kuru descent, who has married the daughter of his maternal uncle, a king of Videha. *Caccantaṇ* is a good king, who is compared, as in the classical royal inscriptions in Sanskrit, to *Tarumaṇ* (Dharma), *Varuṇaṇ*, *Kuṛru* (i.e. Yama), *Vāmaṇ* and *Aintuṭaittirumaṇaṇ*, i.e. *Pañcabāṇa* or *Manmatha*. Unfortunately, one of his ministers attacks him in his palace. Before he is defeated, he has time to put the queen, who is pregnant, into a flying machine which is a mechanical peacock. She escapes by air but, later, she faints. The machine falls on to a cremation ground, and she gives birth to a son. She calls him *Cintāmaṇi*. The forest deity helps her, and directs her to leave the child on the spot and to hide herself. A merchant, who comes with the corpse of his newborn son, takes *Cintāmaṇi* and brings him to his wife as her own revived baby. Consequently *Cintāmaṇi* was called *Civakaṇ* « Having life », and he lived in the capital, growing up with the sons of his father's friends, receiving his education from *Accaṇanti*, who was a king who had become a Jaina ascetic. He revealed to *Civakaṇ* his true identity, but advised him to keep it a secret for the present.

Later on, many cows were taken away by robbers and nobody was brave enough to get them back. The chief of the *āyar* (« those who deal with cows », i.e. Sanskrit *gopa*), named *Nandakōṇ*, « Lord Nanda », promised to give his daughter *Kovintai* (*Govindā*) to anyone who could defeat the robbers. *Civakaṇ* succeeded in doing so without killing anyone, and won the girl but, because of the difference of caste, did not marry her but gave her to one of his fellows.

Thereafter he travelled through India, performing marvellous deeds. He obtained eight wives successively, in different places. The stories vary considerably. Once, a *Vidyādhara* king wants to get his daughter married to *Civakaṇ*; on another occasion *Civakaṇ* has to decide a contest between two girls about the superiority of a toilet-powder. He marries the winner. The other girl becomes an ascetic, but later on he marries her too. He continues with his marvellous deeds. He tames a rogue elephant and kills his father's murderer, together with the murderer's

hundred sons. He takes over the kingdom and spends a happy time with his wives who give him eight sons. He administers justice in the kingdom and practises *dānam* extensively. He regularly pays homage to God in the temples. In the midst of his blissful existence, he happens to see a monkey suddenly deprived of the fruit it is enjoying, and he begins to think about the impermanence of bliss. In this state of mind he comes to the temple and meets two *cāraṇas*, or Jaina ascetics, and receives lengthy instruction from them. He renounces kingship, leaves the world, and disappears, having reached the supreme goal. His wives too renounce worldly life and become kings in later existences. His followers go to heaven.

This narrative is a typical one, purposely attractive through a lengthy poetical evocation of love, of natural beauty, of wealth, power and mundane bliss, but ending with conversion and *mutti* (Sanskrit *mukti*) for all the enlightened heroes.

This kind of literary narration, meant first to catch the attention and then to preach for conversion, is not peculiar to Jaina literature, but is common to many religious works of edification in India. The most ancient example may be the Buddhist *Saundarānandakāvya* of Aśvaghōṣa, while one of the most remarkable is the *Tēmpāvaṇi*, « The unfading garland », written in Tamil by the Italian Jesuit Beschi. Beschi, a great expert in Tamil poetry, was full of admiration for the *Cintāmaṇi*, and followed its pattern when composing the *Tēmpāvaṇi*, which tells the story of Saint Joseph as a Roman Catholic counterpart to the famous *Civakacintāmaṇi*.

The *Tēmpāvaṇi* has, in fact, been admired by Tamil literary men of all creeds. When, in recent times, Unesco began its project « Orient-Occident », Asian National Commissions were asked to propose lists of works worthy of translation for the general public throughout the world, the Ceylonese Commission included the *Tēmpāvaṇi* in its list.

The christianisation of a Tamil Jaina *kāvya* was possible because of a characteristic which is typical of this kind of Jaina narrative poetry, viz. the theology of this Jaina literature is such that it can be accepted by Śaivas, Vaiṣṇavas and also Christians. In spite of the fact that the Jains have 24 Tīrthaṅkaras, they usually worship the last one, Makā-vīraṇ or Varttamānaṇ, under other names, specific or non-specific. Appropriately, every Tīrthaṅkara is *siddha*, « perfect », as the Supreme Principle of the Universe. One of the most specific Tamil names of the Jina is Piṇṭimūrtti (Cīv. 2844), « The manifestation with the Aśoka tree ». Another is Piṇṇināṇ, « Protector with the Aśoka tree » (Cīv. 511).

The non-specific names are those which are not reserved to him exclusively. The most popular is Arukaṇ, which is Aruha, one of the Ardha-māgadhī forms of Sanskrit *arhant* (the others being *araha*, *ariha*, and also *arihaṃta*, explained as meaning « destroyer of enemies »). Aruha does not occur in the Aṅgas, nor is it recorded in the newly published

Āgamaśabdakośa of Ācārya Tulasī, but it alone is accepted in Tamil (with the normal change of *ha*, which is missing in Tamil, to *ka*, pronounced as *ga* intervocalically). Aruhanta is adopted in Tamil as *aru-kantar*, designating the followers of Aruṇa. Ardhamāgadhī *aruha* is also explained as « free from birth »: *na rohati bhūyaḥ saṃsāre samutpadyate* (Ratnacandrajī, *Ardhamāg. Dict.*, and *Abhidhānarājendra*).

Another important name of Aruṇa is, in Tamil, *Vāmaṇ* but this name, which belongs ordinarily to Śiva and rarely to the Buddha (*Maṇi-mēkalai*, V. 77), seems not to have been applied to Mahāvīra in Prakrit and Sanskrit literature. It can be considered as a borrowing from *Śaivāgama* texts. It seems worth while studying this name. We have already referred to *Vāmaṇ* as one of the gods to whom Cīvakaṇ's father was compared. In this context *Vāma* is Śiva, but in other passages of the *Cintāmaṇi* he is the great God and Teacher of the Jains.

In quatrain 2753, addressing Cīvakaṇ, one *cāraṇar* says: « Even if one reaches, with intelligence, great beauty like *Kāmaṇ*, o Lord of the white parasol, more precious will be the conduct of those who follow without fail the way of *Vāmaṇ*'s *nūl* (i.e. *sūtras*) after diverting themselves from the numerous ways which bring the disgrace of the four frightful destinations ». In stanza 2844 the same *sūtras* are referred to as « *Piṇṭimūrtti*'s *nūl* ». In quatrain 3018 *Vāmaṇ* is *Piṇṭivāmaṇ*, and the stanza refers this time to the Aśoka tree as it is represented in some temples in a metallic golden frame encrusted with gems: « The world does not sing of those who do not sing every day of thy qualities, o *Vāma* of the *piṇṭi* with an unfading garland, many buds, protecting the world, being adorned with masses of red gold full of beauty, with rich gems, with diamonds. Those who do not crown themselves first with the flowers which are thy feet, o Creator, will not crown themselves with great diadems [bearing] shining gems in garlands ». This means that those who do not place the God's feet upon their heads will not reach the state of being gods who dwell in paradise.

We may incidentally note the word for diamond: *vairam*. It is clearly borrowed from Ardhamāgadhī *vāira*, although this derivation is not usually given in the dictionaries. We may also observe that « the unfading garland », *vāṭāmalaī*, probably gave inspiration to Beschi, who was a great admirer of the *Cintāmaṇi*, for the title of his own poem *Tēmpāvaṇi*, also an « unfading garland ». We have finally to note that *Vāmaṇ* is qualified as « Creator », « Maker » of the world, *ulakam paṇṇuvar*. He is, therefore, there in the capacity of a personal god acting in this world. That is probably the reason for the borrowing of his name *Vāma* from Śaivism, because, according to the *Śaivāgamas*, the five functions of Sadāśiva are distributed among his five forms: *śṛṣṭi* to Sadyojāta, *sthiti* to Vāmadeva, *saṃhāra* to Aghora, *tirobhāva* to Tatpuruṣa, and *anugraha* to Īśāna. That is also the probable reason why in this stanza the word qualifying his *piṇṭi* or Aśoka tree is *ōmpum*, « that

which protects, or keeps, saves, maintains », not « giving shade ». This connection between Vāma and the function of maintenance still exists. A recent commentary on stanza 160 of the *Cintāmaṇi*, explaining why king Caccantaṇ, Cīvakaṇ's father, is compared to Vāma, says that it is because of his ability in the functions, energies or arts (*kalai*, Sanskrit *kalā*).

Arukaṇ, however, is not merely the Tīrthaṅkara or Arhant *par excellence*, the deified Teacher, but also the unique supreme transcendent Being in general. He is Kaṭavuḷ and Iṟai. Both these titles are connected with verbs which have a common meaning « to go beyond », « to transcend », and they have been adopted in India by all religions, including Christianity. The invocation at the beginning of Tamil Jaina texts is almost always *Kaṭavuḷ vāḷttu*, « Salutation to God ». There the qualification of God as Supreme is clear. He is not a deified prophet. He is Perfect by nature, not by slow acquisition, like a Bodhisattva gradually becoming a Buddha.

In the *Civakacintāmaṇi* the first stanza is: « Without end, without beginning, one and three in the world, he will be worshipped. It is imperishable bliss, when after rushing in Himself, one tells the Rich Lord of the brilliant treasure of ever-present qualities, in order to join today the feet of the God who surpasses the gods (Devātideva) ». This concept of Arukaṇ as Supreme God like Śiva was not an innovation at the time of Tiruttakkatēvar. The *Cilappatikāram*, which we have left aside until now because its purely Jaina character is doubtful, contains, as sung by a *cāraṇar*, i.e. a Jaina ascetic, 14 verses enumerating 47 names of God (*Cilap.* X, 176-89), beginning with Aṟivaṇ (corresponding to Sanskrit Jñānin), Aṟavōṇ (Dharmin), Aṟivuvarampikantōṇ (Jñānapāraga), Ceṟivaṇ (Pūrṇa or, according to the commentary and Tamil Lexicon, « Person of perfect equanimity »), Ciṇēntiraṇ (Jinendra), Cittaṇ (siddha), Pakavaṇ (Bhagavant), etc. These names are not merely transcriptions or translations from Sanskrit. Even when they seem to be so, they may also have had an original meaning of their own. For example, in verse 180 we read Ciṇavaram, which is evidently Jinavara, « Eminent among the Jinas », but Atiyarkkunallar, one of the most famous commentators (13th century) glosses: *Cinattai-kilppaṭuttīyavaṇ*, « The one who alleviates anger ». We must therefore accept that there is a double meaning intended here.

There are also ambiguities or doubtful interpretations given by the commentators. For example, in verse 181 we read: Paramaṇ (« Supreme ») Kuṇavataṇ and Parattil oḷiyōṇ (« Light in the thither world »). The ambiguous term here is *Kuṇavataṇ*, which is explained in the old commentary as: *Kuṇattai-y-ūṭaiyavaṇ*, « Possessing the quality ». *Kuṇavataṇ* would be *guṇavrata* in Sanskrit, meaning « Having quality as a vow ». There are, however, according to the modern critical editor V. Cāminātaiyar, three kinds of *vrata* for Jains: *aṇuviratam*, *guṇaviratam* and

cikṣāvīratam. There are also three kinds of *guṇavīratam*: *dikkuvīratam*, *tēcavīratam* and *anarttataṇṭavīratam*, i.e. vows of limitation in moving in various directions and places, of staying, and of abstention from what is futile or punishable¹. The first interpretation seems to be more appropriate, for the second interpretation referring to rules for Jaina laymen seems unsuitable for the Lord of the world who is also called *Īraivaṇ* (verse 185), *Caṅkaraṇ*, *Īcaṇ*, *Cayampu* (186), as well as *Caturmukaṇ*, *Brahman*, or *Paṇṇavaṇ*, the « Creator » (188) or *Vetamutaivaṇ* (189), again *Brahman* as the « First in the Veda ».

This list of names of *Arukaṇ* as Supreme God appears to be the oldest of its kind found so far, although the date of the *Cilappatikāram* is the subject of controversy. The story of the hero *Kōvalaṇ* and of his ideal wife, *Kaṇṇaki*, is continued in the *Maṇimēkalai*. The authors of these two *kāvya*s were friends, and their works belong to the same period. The author of the *Cilappatikāram* was a young prince, the brother of king *Ceṅkuttuvaṇ*. At the end of the story this king is said to have built a temple in honour of *Kaṇṇaki* as *Pattiṇi* (Sanskrit *Patnī*). According to an addition to the text (XXX.160), he also built a temple to *Pattiṇi*. This king is known from the Pāli chronicles to have reigned at the end of the 2nd century A.D., and the *Cilappatikāram* and the *Maṇimēkalai* would therefore have been composed at this time. Many critics are, however, reluctant to accept this dating in spite of these precise indications in the text. They attack as worthless the reference to *Gajabāhu*, since *Gajabāhu* may not have been the historical king but a mythical one according to the Sinhala tradition². Whatever the truth of this matter may be, such critics have pointed out differences of language and style in Tamil between the 2nd century and the period of composition which they propose. There is, however, no text datable with certainty to that century with which comparison may be made. On the other hand, we may observe that the *Maṇimēkalai* (XV.3) refers incidentally to camphor being collected on a great chain of mountains in *Cāvakam*, i.e. the Indonesian Archipelago. This trade has continued until modern times, so that a reference to it does not in itself give a date, but neither does it authorise us to suppose that the *Maṇimēkalai* refers only to a late period of the traffic. Plinius wrote about a mountain which cast its shadow for six months towards the North, and for six months towards the South. This applies to only one mountain, which is located in Sumatra, close to the Equator. Ptolemaeus mentioned a cape which lies in fact at the foot of this mountain, and he gave approximately

1. In (Jaina) Sanskrit, these three *guṇavratas* are known as: *digvirati*, *deśavirati*, and *anarthadaṇḍakavirati*. These *viratis* are prescribed for laymen.

2. GANANATH OBEYSEKERE, *Gajabahu and the Gajabahu synchronism*, in « The Ceylon Journal of Humanities », vol. I (Jan. 1970), no. 1, pp. 25-56 (I have to thank Prof. H. Bechert for kindly making this article known to me).

the correct latitude. Plinius calls the mountain Malaeus, which corresponds to Tamil *malai*, « mountain ». There is other evidence too to show that the Tamil people were very active at the beginning of the Christian era³. There is no decisive reason for considering the *Cilappatikāram* to be a late composition. Whatever may be its actual date of composition, the list it gives of the names of Arukaṇ as Supreme God is the most ancient in any South Indian literature. There is one counterpart much later in Sanskrit, which is ascribed to Hemacandra, apparently in error. It is the *Arhannāmasahasrasamuccaya* (or *ṇāmāṣṭā-grasahasra*^o), which was published in Ahmedabad in 1932 as the first text in a collection of stotras: *Jainastotrasandoha*.

The first names given in this work are: *śrīmān arhan jinaḥ svāmī svayambhūḥ śambhūr ātmabhūḥ* (I.3). The name Mahāvīra appears only in VI.10 between *mahasāṃ patiḥ* (VI.9) and *Mahādhīra*, and is impersonal. Vardhamāna does not appear at all; Rṣabha is given in VI.8. The majority of names, however, are applicable to any Supreme Being: Mahājina, Mahābuddha, Mahābrahman, Mahāśiva, Mahāviṣṇu (VI.1), and also Brahmā, Pañcabrahmamayaḥ Śivaḥ. This last name corresponds to Pañcānana Sadāśiva of the *Saivāgamas*. Vāma is absent. In the last section of the list (X.1-4) we find names which are fit for a personal god acting in this world in a Jaina form: Ādideva, Devadeva, Jinadeva, Jinādhīśa and, more specifically, Syādvādin. There we have the exact counterparts of the Tamil Arukaṇ, who was praised in the narrative literature we have already mentioned.

We have some Jaina stories to mention. We have already alluded to the *Peruṅkatai*. There is also an *Utayaṇankatai*. We cannot deal in this paper with these works which are associated with the cycle of the *Bṛhatkathā*. We can only mention the *Cūḷamaṇi* of Tōlāmoḷittēvar (10th century), a narrative poem in more than 2000 quatrains, full, like the *Cintāmaṇi*, of evocations of mundane bliss and ending in the same way with a splendid description of the cult of Arukaṇ and the final conversion of the heroes to the Jaina faith. The original version of the story has been found in Jinasena's *Mahāpurāṇam* (8th century).

Another narrative poem which deserves more attention is the *Nīlakēci*. It is not as popular as the others. Nevertheless, in some respects, it is more important. It is relatively short, containing 892 quatrains in

3. J. FILLIOZAT, *Pline et le Malaya*, in JA, 1974, pp. 119-30; *The oldest sea-routes of the Tamil trade*, in « Bull. of the Inst. of Traditional Cultures » (1976), pp. 21-8; J. ANDRÉ et J. FILLIOZAT, *Pline l'Ancien*, in « Histoire naturelle », livre VI, Paris, 1980, pp. 146 foll.

10 *carukkaṇkaḷ* or *sargas*. It tells the imaginary story of the successive travels of the heroine *Nilakēci*, undertaken in order to have discussions with prominent non-Jaina philosophers with the aim of turning them into Jainas. The author is unknown. The author of the *vytti* was Samaya-divākara Vāmanamuni, who is identified with Vāmanācārya⁴, alias Mal-lisenācārya, whose pupil was Puṣpasenācārya. The latter, in turn, was the teacher of Irugappa, a general of Bukkarāya. Vāmanamuni is therefore to be placed at the beginning of the 13th century or at the end of the 12th. The date of the original work itself can only be deduced from its contents.

The poem *Nilakēci* is directed against another one, now lost but known from quotations: the *Kuṇṭalakēci*. This is based upon the story in Pāli of Bhaddā Kuṇḍalakesā, a Buddhist *therī* known from the *Therī-gāthā*, the *Aṅguttaranikāya* and several *aṭṭhakathās*⁵. She murdered her husband, who was a robber, embraced the Nigaṇṭha persuasion, and was finally converted by Sāriputta and the Buddha. According to the Tamil legend, she was very active in propagating Buddhism, which accounts for the composition of the poem *Kuṇṭalakēci*. The heroine *Nilakēci* takes revenge upon her.

During a *caturmāsya*, one Jinamuni established himself near a cremation ground in the vicinity of a temple to Kālī. Many bloody sacrifices were offered to Kālī. Jinamuni urged the people to substitute clay models for living animals when making their offerings. Kālī was angry, and tried to frighten Jinamuni, but without success. She took the form of the daughter of the king, and went to him. He recognised her and defeated her. Then she asked for instruction in the *Tarumam* (*Dharma*). This forms the introduction of the first *sarga*: *Tarumavurai*, « Exposition of the Dharma ». This *sarga*, preceded by the salutation to God: *Kaṭavuḷ vālttu*, begins as follows: « The Excellent One will be worshipped, He who is free from the four [things] beginning with birth, He who has the word which turns misery into happiness, when putting an end to the affliction of the souls, He the old one called "The owner of the light of the Dharma", the Omniscient One, after having exalted Him as God » (*īraiyaṅka vētti*).

Nilakēci, as soon as she has been instructed in the Law, resolves to fight in favour of *Dharma* and *Ahiṃsā*. She goes to *Kuṇṭalakēci*'s city to challenge her to a religious discussion. *Kuṇṭalakēci* begins by summarising the Buddhist doctrine, and she exalts the generosity of the Bodhisattva in various previous births, when he gave away his head, or his flesh, or his children as slaves. *Nilakēci* maintains that this is mere absurdity, and finally *Kuṇṭalakēci* is defeated. Then *Nilakēci* turns towards a teacher of *Kuṇṭalakēci*, *Arukkacantiraṇ* (*Arkacandra*), at

4. *Nilakēci*, ed. A. Chakravarti [Kumbhakōṇam], 1936, p. 11; text p. 368.

5. Cf. G. P. MALALASEKERA, *Dict. of Pāli proper names*, s.v. Bhaddā.

Ujjayinī. Again she maintains the invalidity of the *Jātaka* stories, and denounces the contradiction of the Buddhists who eat meat but forbid killing. She urges the adoption of *Ahiṃsā* and of the doctrine of the reality of the *ātman*. She also accuses some Buddhist monks of violating rules of chastity, telling some illustrative stories.

The next challenge (chapter IV) is to Mokkalaṇ (Pāli Moggallāna, Sanskrit Maudgalyāyana). Mokkalaṇ is an abbreviation of the Pāli form (final -ṇ does not represent Pāli -ana, but is the Tamil masculine singular ending). In this case the discussion is more elaborate than in the talk with Arukkacantiraṇ. Nīlakēci wishes to defeat the second disciple of the Buddha in the same way in which the first disciple, Sāriputta, converted Kuṇṭhalakēci. The discussion is also more philosophical, e.g. when dealing with the relation between *kuṇam* and *kuṇi* (Sanskrit *guṇa* and *guṇin*, stanzas 381 foll.). According to Nīlakēci, both are real but not separable. As far as the liberated soul is concerned, Mokkalaṇ thinks that it is unconscious, or it would still be dependent upon *karman*, but Nīlakēci maintains that consciousness is compatible with the state of liberation. Finally, Mokkalaṇ advises her to meet the Buddha, and she meets him at Kapilapura while he is explaining the theory of the five *kandas* (Sanskrit *skandha*). Once again they discuss the question of *kuṇam* and *kuṇi*, and many other problems. Nīlakēci strongly opposes the *kṣaṇikavāda*, and maintains the necessity of a continuous *ātman* and the Jaina doctrines of *anēkāntavātam* and *pētāpētam* (*bhedābheda*). The Buddha is inclined to follow these views.

Nīlakēci next visits the Ājīvakas, then the Cāṅkiyas, the Vaicēṭikas, the Mīmāṃsakas, whose doctrine she calls *Vēdavātam*, and lastly she fights against those who uphold the *Pūtavātam* (*bhūtavāda*), materialism. Everywhere Nīlakēci is victorious.

It has been observed by the editor, A. Chakravarti, who contributes a detailed introduction to the work, that the major non-Jaina schools of philosophy: Śāṅkara, the Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava Saints, Nāyaṇmār and Ālvār, are not mentioned in the work. Chakravarti thinks that this is because they did not yet exist as opponents of the Jaina doctrine, so that the polemical work *Nīlakēci* must belong to the period before their emergence. This may place the composition of the *Nīlakēci* in the 5th or 6th centuries.

At a later date, the Jains were strongly attacked on occasion by the Śaivas, but there may be another reason why Nīlakēci did not fight against them. Even when conflicts occurred between Jains and Śaivas, there was in Tamilnad an element of fundamental agreement between them, and also with the Vaiṣṇavas: the worship of God. It is this worship which is first referred to at the very beginning of the fictitious tale of Nīlakēci. Consequently the author refrained from sending his heroine Nīlakēci against the Śaivas and the Vaiṣṇavas, not because they were not important in his time, but because he shared, to some extent

at least, the same spirit that they had. Moreover, the Saivas and the Vaiṣṇavas observed *Ahiṃsā*, unlike the Buddhists. We are therefore not compelled to fix the date of the poem before the 5th or 6th centuries, although this dating remains plausible.

The work is, in any case, evidence of the competence of the unknown author in Jaina philosophy, and in contemporary doctrine opposed to Jaina beliefs and practices. The author of the *vr̥tti* was also a remarkable scholar. He quotes profusely from Tamil and Sanskrit literature and, when necessary, uses the mixture of Sanskrit and Tamil called *maṇipīravāḷam*, «gem and coral» or «coral with gems». This technical language is ordinarily used by the Vaiṣṇavas in both Tamil and Malayalam. We have here an example of the extension of its use. The understanding of this language requires, first, a complete knowledge of both Sanskrit and Tamil grammar. That is why, nowadays, Tamil people hearing some unintelligible statement say: «It is *maṇipīravāḷam*», just as we might say in such a case: «It is Hebrew» or «Greek». This is also one explanation for the lack of appreciation of the commentary, when the Tamil original itself was not easily understood by literary men, in spite of its being a good poetical composition.

We have to note that the commentator, being fully acquainted with Sanskrit, seems not to have made direct use of the Jaina Prakrit scriptures. The same is true of Aruṇanti tēvanāyaṇar who, in the same 13th century, composed the *Civañāṇacittiyār* which contains two parts: 1) an examination and refutation of *parapakṣa*, and 2) an exposition of the *supakṣa*, i.e. the Saivasiddhānta doctrine. He refutes the Cārvaka, Sautrāntika, Yogācāra, Vaibhāṣika, Nigaṇṭha, Ājīvaka, Mīmāṃsaka, Nirīśvarasāṃkhya, and also the Māyāvādin and Pāñcarātra.

The *Nilakēci* and the *vr̥tti* on the *Nilakēci* are the Jaina representatives of polemical philosophical literature in Tamil, and the *Nilakēci* is also a narrative piece of poetry. The spirit of this text, and of the other texts previously mentioned, which are characterised by the devotion to God in general, is also extended to non-narrative gnomic literature in Tamil, and even to some technical literature. Many Tamil authors are well known as belonging to the Jaina community, including those of the grammars *Viracōḷiyam* and *Naṇṇūl*. Even the *Tolkāppiyam* has been claimed to be Jaina, but there is no evidence for this, and it seems most improbable. The question remains open with regard to the most famous collections of gnomic sentences, such as the *Nāḷaiyār* and the *Kuraḷ*.

It would have been necessary, in order to cover all the fields of Dravidian Jaina narrative literature, to include a description of that in Kannaḍa but I am, unfortunately, not sufficiently conversant with Kannaḍa to do this. I have to restrict myself to information given to me by one of my pupils (and daughter-in-law), which is derived from the

more recent works on this subject in Kannaḍa. I have no time to say more than that the major relevant original works in the Kannaḍa language belong to the 10th century. They are, therefore, contemporary with the greatest comparable works in Tamil, i.e. the *Cīvakacintāmaṇi* and the *Cūḷāmaṇi*. The *Vaḍḍāradhane* is dated 920 A.D., and the *Triṣaṣṭipurāṇa* 978. Both are stories in *gadya*. The Kannaḍa *Ādipurāṇa* of Pampa is in *padya*, and was composed in 941 A.D. Other works in *padya* are Ponna's *Jinākṣaramāle* (950 A.D.) and *Sāntipurāṇa*, telling the story of the 16th Tīrthaṃkara. In about 993 A.D. Ranna composed the story of the second Tīrthaṃkara, etc.⁶

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In conclusion we may say two things: First, the spirit of Tamil Jainism has been well accommodated with Saivism, which explains why Jainism has survived in Tamilnad while Buddhism has been expelled. It was, moreover, much appreciated because of the literary value of its narrative literature. Secondly, it seems clear that Jaina studies must include the evolution and living presence of the Jaina religion and culture in South India from the Middle Ages up to the present time. Buddhist studies in Europe have for the last century included Chinese and Tibetan, since there is a need to gain knowledge of Indian texts lost in India itself, and also to investigate the developments of Buddhism in the Far East. In Jaina studies there is no need to consider foreign developments, but we have to pay attention to internal developments in India.

6. Cf. also S. R. SHARMA, *Jainism and Karnāṭaka Culture*, Dharwar, 1940.

[For a general survey, see *Jaina Literature in Tamil* by... A. CHAKRAVARTI... with An Introduction, Footnotes, Appendix and Index by K. V. RAMESH, (New Delhi), 1974 (Bhāratiya Jñānapīṭha Publication, Jñānapīṭha Mūrtidevī Granthamālā: English Series 3). ED.].